

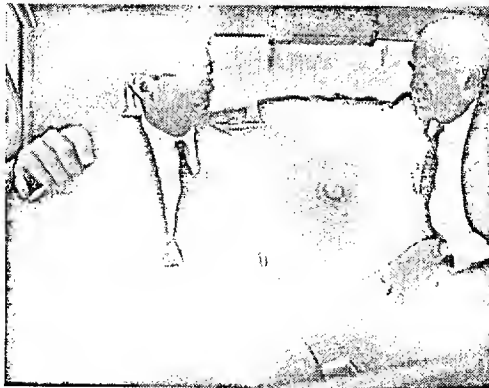
EDITORS' NOTE

A Reunion of Two Classmates

Back in the days when he was campus correspondent for a Boston paper, LIFE's political editor, Robert Ajemian, used to file occasional stories about his classmate Robert Kennedy, who was probably the grittiest and certainly one of the smallest members of the Harvard varsity football team. At the time, the two were casual friends. Bob went on to become a sportswriter, joined LIFE as a reporter in 1951 and did not bump into R.F.K. again until the 1960 presidential campaign. When he did, it was in Wisconsin on the eve of the primary election and, says Bob, "It was like a reunion. There was Bobby, and a whole lot of my other Harvard friends."

Then Ajemian, who had toured the U.S. with Eisenhower in '52 and with both Eisenhower and Stevenson in '56, wrote us an article on the primary (LIFE, March 28, 1960) saying that John Kennedy's Catholicism would help him win the Wisconsin vote. It turned out that he was right. But the fact that he was first to air the question cooled the reunion atmosphere considerably.

A year later Bob went to Paris as LIFE's Chief European Correspondent, a job which took him from Kenya to Moscow and over most of Europe, and this spring he is back here covering the '64 campaign. Once more he has toured with the candidates—this time Rockefeller, Goldwater and Scranton. More and more he found himself thinking about Robert Kennedy and wondering about his future plans.

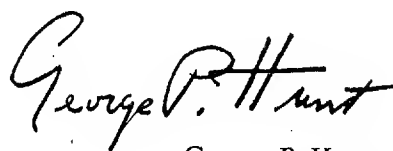


BOB KENNEDY AND BOB AJEMIAN

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This month he visited Kennedy to make plans for the lead story of this issue. He found the Attorney General at Hickory Hill, in McLean, Va. The atmosphere was warm and personal. When Bob arrived, Kennedy was about to take a bath, and invited him into the bathroom. Sitting in the tub shaving, a razor in one hand and a highball in the other, R.F.K. told Bob he felt there was no story in his future: "Anyway, I'm not the kind of guy who can talk about myself and I don't want to go on the couch." He was equally unenthusiastic about talking of the past: "I've learned to put it out of my mind," he said. "The whole thing is too depressing." But he agreed to let Bob try.

In the last week or so Ajemian and Photographer George Silk have been sticking close to Kennedy, traveling with him to Marquette University in Milwaukee, Wis. to see him get an honorary degree and to Los Angeles to hear him talk on the problems of juvenile delinquency. All the time the Attorney General was laconic, determined to avoid self-pity—and skeptical that he was worth such interest. "I see you're still with me," he said as the plane flew back from the coast. To see how Bob Ajemian made out, turn to page 25.



GEORGE P. HUNT
Managing Editor